REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 10, 15, 18, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 35 have been amended. Claims 2 and 33 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3-32, and 34-40 remain pending.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 10, 15, 24, and 29-32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Basilico (US 6,243,360). Claims 2-4, 6, 11, 16-18, 20, 25, 26, 33-35, and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Basilico in view of Yates et al. (US 6,167,438). Claims 5, 7-9, 13, 14, 19, 21-23, 27, 28, 36, and 38-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Basilico in view of Yates et al. and in further view of Nataraj et al. (US 6,154,348). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed as follows.

Claim 1 is directed towards a method "of distributing packets among a plurality of cache systems." Claim 1 also requires "configuring a content addressable memory (CAM) to indicate distribution of received packets based on a load balancing technique to a plurality of cache systems that each spoof a destination indicated by the received packets" and "receiving a packet." Claim 1 also requires "inputting at least a portion of the packet into the CAM." Claim 1 also requires "obtaining a result from the CAM to indicate whether to redirect the received packet to a selected cache system" and "redirecting the received packet to the selected cache system when the CAM indicates to redirect the received packet and to indicate to which cache system selected from among the plurality of cache systems the received packet is to be redirected if the CAM also indicates that the received packet is to be redirected." Claim 1 further requires "sending the received packet to a destination indicated by the received packet when the CAM does not indicate to redirect the received packet." Independent claims 15, 29, and 31 have a similar limitation regarding configuring a CAM to indicate distribution of received packets based on a load balancing technique to a plurality of cache systems that each spoof a destination indicated by the received packets and obtaining a result from the CAM which indicates whether to redirect the received packet and to indicate to which cache system selected from among the plurality of cache systems the received packet is to be redirected if the CAM also indicates that the received packet is to be redirected.

Claim 10 is directed towards "method for facilitating traffic distribution among a plurality of devices. Claim 10 also requires "generating a plurality of entries within a content addressable memory" and "each entry including a set of bit values that correspond to at least a portion of a packet and each entry including one or more destination fields indicating where to send a packet that matches the entry's set of bit values and indicating whether to redirect the packet from a destination indicated by the packet, wherein the CAM is configured to distribute received packets to the plurality of processing devices cache systems based on a load balancing

technique." Claims 24, 30, and 32 also have an apparatus or computer program product for configuring such a CAM.

The primary reference Basilico is generally directed at a LAN switch 10 which can route data to a plurality of output ports 20 which are each coupled to a different NIC (network interface card) 22 of a single server 14. See Column 4, Lines 18-35 and FIG. 1. The Examiner states in the Office Action dated 10 August 2004 that Basilico does not show a cache system (to which the data is distributed) and argues that it would be obvious to modify the system shown in Basilico to include a cache system (to which data is distributed).

In order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, MPEP 2143 requires among other things that the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, not in applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck,* 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Although the Examiner argued that it would be obvious to add a cache system to the system of Basilico, it is respectfully submitted that Basilico lacks motivation for modifying its systems in such a way and teaches away from making such modification.

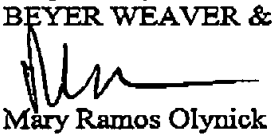
The system of Basilico for using a CAM to distribute data to different output ports is vastly different than configuring or using a CAM to distribute data to different cache systems, in the manner claimed. Basilico is balancing the load between different pipes or data ports which go to the same end processor or server, while the present invention includes mechanisms for balancing the load between different end processing devices, *i.e.,* cache systems. That is, Basilico is balancing data between different data transmission mechanisms (output ports or NIC's), while embodiments of the present invention include mechanisms for balancing data between different end processing mechanisms which handle the data. Once the data is distributed to a particular data transmission channel (port or NIC) in Basiloco, the receiving transmission channel then simply sends the data to the same server for end processing. Since the system of Basilico includes a switch which distributes data first to a transmission device (port or NIC) which then send the data to the same end processing device (server), replacing each of the NIC's with a cache system is not possible without substantially modification of the server of Basilico. A cache system typically includes its own NIC, processor and memory. Likewise, the server 14 of Basilico also includes its own processor, memory, and NIC's. One would have to integrate or combine the hardware and software of the processors and memories of the server of Basilico and each of the cache systems. The CAM would also have to be reconfigured to distribute the data to the different cache systems which will have their own NIC's.

In sum, one cannot simply add a cache system into the system of Basilico. Most importantly, there is no reasonable expectation of success that a cache system would work in the system of Basilico which distributes data to different ports and NIC's of a same server. The reasonable expectation of success is only taught in the Applicant's disclosure and not taught or suggested in the prior art. In sum, Basilico and Yates cannot be combined to achieve a mechanism for redirecting data to a selected cache system using a load balancing technique, in the manner claimed. In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 10, 15, 24, 29, 30, 31, and 32 are patentably distinct from the cited art.

The Examiner's rejections of the dependent claims are also respectfully traversed. However, to expedite prosecution, all of these claims will not be argued separately. Claims 3-9, 11-14, 16-23, 25-28, and 34-40 each depend directly from independent claims 1, 10, 15, 24, 29, 30, 31, or 32 and, therefore, are respectfully submitted to be patentable over cited art for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1, 10, 15, 24, 29, 30, 31, or 32. Further, the dependent claims require additional elements that when considered in context of the claimed inventions further patentably distinguish the invention from the cited art.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP



Mary Ramos Olynick
Reg. 42,963

P.O. Box 778
Berkeley, CA 94704-0778
(510) 843-6200